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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MMO-01 PER-01 ABF-01 SS-15 SP-02
/035 W
----------112456 280215Z /61
R 272057Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9990

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 5618

STADIS//////////////////

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AODE, AFSP, APER
SUBJECT: MODE STAFF REDUCTIONS

REF: A. STATE 185022, B. SANTIAGO 9500

1. I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE MY THOUGHTS ON USICA AND FAS STAFF LEVELS. ON ARRIVAL HERE, I TENTATIVELY ENDORSED THE MODE RECOMMENDATIONS OF MY PREDECESSOR SUBJECT TO LATER REVIEW WHEN MY CONTRIBUTION WOULD HAVE MORE MEANING. AFTER SIX MONTHS AT POST I HAVE REVIEWED THIS SITUATION AND, HENCE, YOUR CABLE IS VERY TIMELY. IN GIVING MY RECOMMENDATIONS, I AM MINDFUL OF THE USG'S INTENTIONS, FROM THE PRESIDENT ON DOWN, TO MAKE SELECTIVE REDUCTIONS IN OVERSEAS STAFFING, AND I FULLY ENDORSE THIS GOAL. IN THIS REGARD, SANTIAGO, THROUGH ITS OWN INITIATIVE AS WELL AS BY THE CIRCUMSTANCE OF CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS, HAS PROBABLY TAKEN MORE REDUCTIONS THAN MOST POSTS WORLDWIDE.

2. USICA - WITH THIS AS BACKGROUND, LET ME SAY THAT I CONCUR IN THE ABOLISHMENT OF THE THIRD CAO POSITION AS A NECESSARY FURTHER STEP IN THE BELT TIGHTENING PROCESS. HOWEVER, I DO NOT CONCUR IN THE ELIMINATION OF THE AMERICAN BNC DIRECTOR POSITIONS
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IN VALPARAISO AND CONCEPCION. AT THIS TIME, I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO RETAIN THE USICA EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUBJECT TO FURTHER REVIEW.

3. DURING THESE TIMES OF TENSE AND DETERIORATING BILATERAL RELATIONS, I ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO MAINTAINING A STRONG CULTURAL (AND COMMERCIAL) PRESENCE IN CHILE. IN MY OPINION, THESE ARE THE BLOCKS UPON WHICH WE CAN REBUILD A SOLID RELATIONSHIP IN THE POST-

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PINOCHET ERA, AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP THIS ESSENTIALLY
APOLITICAL FOUNDATION FIRMLY IN PLACE. I HAVE VISITED THE BNC
IN VALPARAISO AND KNOW AT FIRST HAND THE FINE JOB THAT THE
AMERICAN DIRECTOR IS DOING THERE. I DO NOT BELIEVE CHILEAN NATIONAL
CENTER DIRECTORS, PARTICULARLY AT TIMES SUCH AS THESE, CAN
BEGIN TO PROVIDE THE SERVICE THAT SKILLED AMERICAN CENTER DIRECTORS
CAN OFFER. I SHOULD ALSO ADD THAT THESE ARE OUR ONLY TWO AMERICAN-
MANNED LISTENING POSTS OUTSIDE THE SANTIAGO METROPOLITAN AREA.
I BELIEVE THAT THE COMPLEXITY AND SIZE OF THE CHILEAN USICA
PROGRAM, PARTICULARLY WITH THE RETENTION OF FULL PROGRAMMING
IN VALPARAISO AND CONCEPCION, ARGUE FOR RETAINING THE USICA
ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION SUBJECT TO LATER SCRUTINY.

4. FAS - I DO NOT FIND THE FAS ARGUMENT FOR RETAINING THE
AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE POSITION AT ALL COMPELLING, AND URGE THE
EARLY ABOLISHMENT OF THIS POSITION.

5. THE EMBASSY HAS A BROADLY EXPERIENCED AND HARD WORKING
ECONOMIC SECTION AND, WITH THE HELP OF THE EXCELLENT FAS LOCAL
STAFF AND OCCASIONAL VISITS BY A REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE
LOCATED ELSEWHERE, IS FULLY COMPETENT TO HANDLE FAS PROGRAM
ACTIVITY. IT IS WORTH REPEATING A POINT MADE IN AN EARLIER MESSAGE
THAT MOST OF THE AGRICULTURAL REPORTS ARE DRAFTED BY A LOCAL
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIC PROFESSIONAL AND THEN REVIEWED. THE REVIEW/
SUPERVISION FUNCTION COULD CERTAINLY BE PERFORMED WITHIN THE ECONOMIC
SECTION WHICH MAINTAINS AN AGRICULTURAL BRIEF IN ANY CASE TO
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INSURE COORDINATION BETWEEN THE TWO SECTIONS. IN THE EXPORT
PROMOTION LINE, OUR ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SECTION ALREADY SERVICES
A VARIETY OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES AND AGRICULTURAL
ACTIVITIES ARE WHOLLY COMPATIBLE WITH THIS MANDATE. ALSO, CHILE
IS MORE IMPORTANT AS A MINERALS COUNTRY THAN AGRICULTURALLY, AND
THE ECONOMIC SECTION, WITHOUT SPECIALLY QUALIFIED LOCALS AND
WITH VERY RARE VISITS BY THE REGIONAL MINERALS OFFICER IN LA
PAZ, HAS RECEIVED HIGH PRAISE FROM WASHINGTON FOR ITS REPORTING.
IT CAN DO AT LEAST AS WELL FOR AGRICULTURE. A RECENT FAS VISITOR
FROM WASHINGTON, JOHN MCDONALD, WESTERN HEMISPHERE AREA OFFICER,
DOUBTED THAT THE REGIONAL FAS OFFICE IN BUENOS AIRES COULD ADD
CHILE TO ITS PRESENT RESPONSIBILITIES (WHICH ALSO INCLUDE URUGUAY
AND PARAGUAY). HOWEVER, IF THE SANTIAGO POSITION WERE TRANSFERRED
ELSEWHERE, SUCH AS TO URUGUAY, A LARGELY AGRICULTURAL COUNTRY,
WHERE MCDONALD TOLD ME AN AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE WAS VERY MUCH
WANTED, REGIONAL TIME FROM ONE OF THESE OTHER LOCATIONS SHOULD BE
FREED FOR VISITS TO CHILE. (OF COURSE, NONAVAILABILITY OF REGIONAL
TIME SHOULD NOT BE AN ARGUMENT FOR KEEPING AN UNNEEDED AMERICAN
OFFICER IN SANTIAGO BUT IF COVERAGE FROM SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES
IS NOT AVAILABLE, PERHAPS THE REGIONAL FAS OFFICER IN LIMA COULD
INCLUDE SANTIAGO IN HIS PORTFOLIO.)

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6. IN SHORT, I URGE THE RETENTION OF THE TWO AMERICAN BNC DIRECTOR POSITIONS, DEFERRING THE USICA ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION FOR FURTHER STUDY, AND CONCUR IN THE ABOLISHMENT OF THE THIRD CAO AND FAS POSITIONS.
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